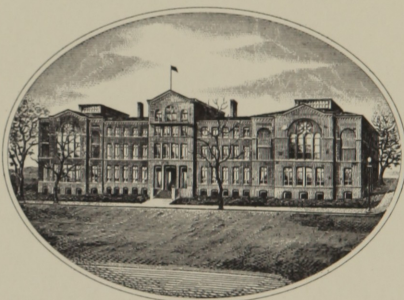


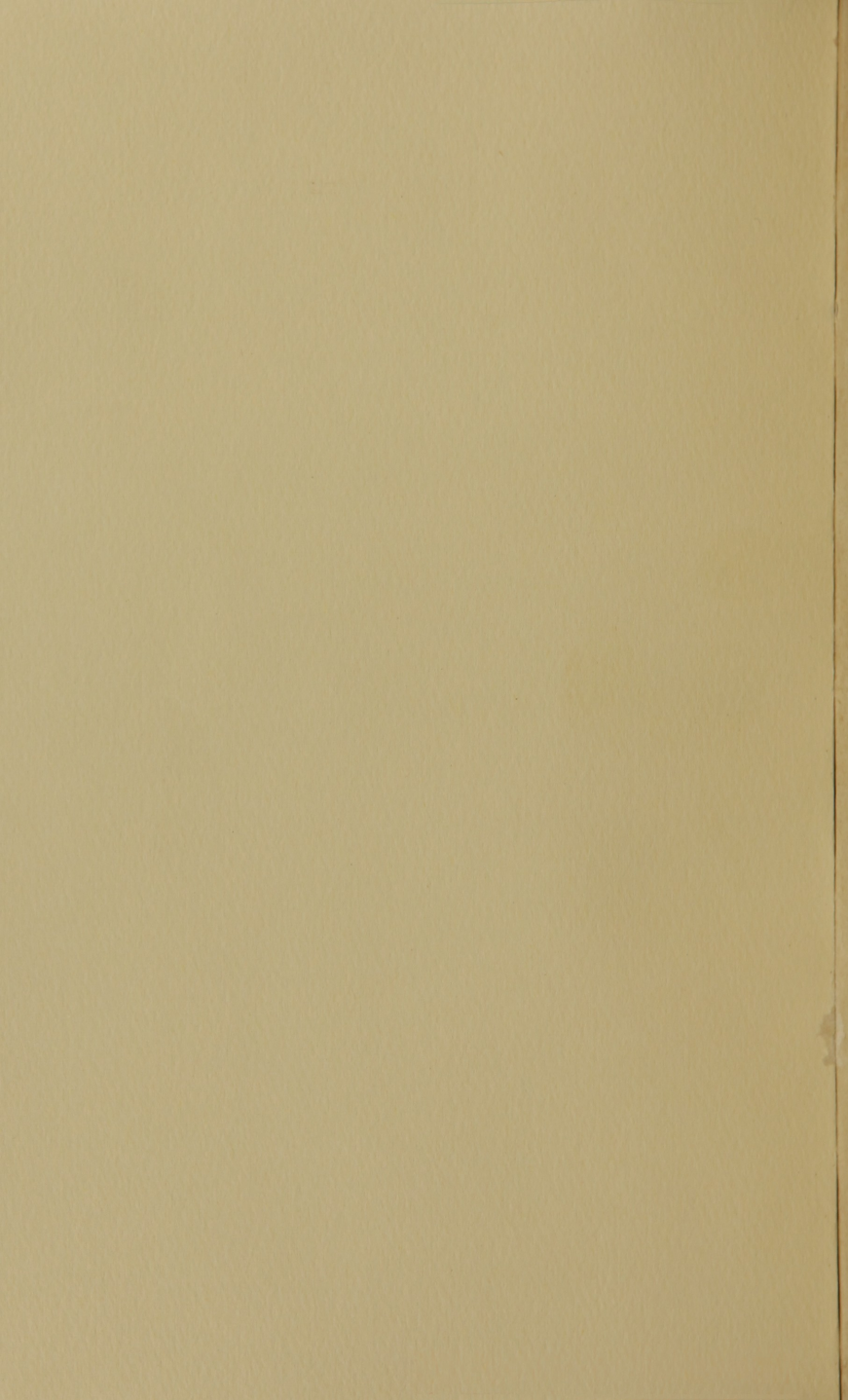


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LETTERS

RELATIVE TO

THE VACCINE INSTITUTION,

ADDRESSED TO

THE MEMBERS OF THE

Hon. the General Assembly of Maryland,

BY

JAMES SMITH,

United States' Agent of Vaccination.

BALTIMORE :

1818.

TWO

LETTERS

RELATIVE TO

THE VACCINE INSTITUTION

ADDRESSED TO

THE MEMBERS OF THE

Hon. the General Assembly of Maryland

BY

JAMES SMITH

United States Agent of Vaccination

BALTIMORE

LETTER I.

HAVING lately presented a memorial to the Honourable the General Assembly of Maryland, relating to a subject in which the health and safety of the citizens of this state are deeply interested ; I hoped that my propositions would have been brought before you without delay, and that they would have met with the unanimous approbation and support of the Legislature. In these expectations however, I have been greatly disappointed ; and have since found that some very erroneous impressions have been made on the publick feeling, not only against me, but unfavorable perhaps to the Managers of the Vaccine Institution Lottery, whose high and irreproachable standing in society, place them in the estimation of their fellow citizens, far above the most remote suspicion of any improper act.* I must therefore, claim your attention while I give you a correct statement of the former proceedings of the Legislature relative to this subject. I will also endeavour to make you fully acquainted with the manner in which the act of assembly passed at November session, 1809, authorising a lottery for the preservation and distribution of the Vaccine Matter, for the use of the citizens of this state, was carried into operation, and will exhibit to you the amount of nett proceeds derived from said lottery, and the purposes to which these proceeds have been applied.

In another letter, which I will forward as soon as practicable, I will state some other circumstances which may perhaps, be interesting to you : and in as much as

* It has been alleged, that I remain under an obligation to erect permanent publick buildings for a Vaccine Institution, for the use of the citizens of Maryland, in consequence of a certain Lottery which was drawn, it is supposed, for that purpose.

the facts I have to relate will shew the effects which have resulted from the operation of the law which has expired, they may be considered as more immediately relating to the memorial which I have presented.

In performing this task, which I have prescribed to myself, I must beg your kind indulgence, should my letter unavoidably be long and tiresome : and I hope forgiveness when I inform you, that I have not been able to do my duty under the late law of this state without exciting many personal prejudices, and suffering every inconvenience which inimical dispositions could invent to obstruct my plans, whether proposed^a for my own convenience, or for the publick good. Whether these prejudices have been excited from my own conduct, or from the nature of my office, or of the law under which I acted, you will hereafter perhaps be able correctly to decide. I can only assure you, that I have executed the trust reposed in me, with a consciousness of having performed my duty with uninterrupted fidelity to the state, and with a degree of zeal for the publick good, which has never permitted, that I should confine myself within the limits of my official duties ; but has often induced me to incur many heavy expenses, for which I never could expect to receive any pecuniary, or other reward than the satisfaction to be experienced from preventing the suffering or destruction of our fellow creatures by the Small Pox. No individual to my knowledge, has ever openly accused me of neglect of duty, or of any one unjustifiable act ; but I daily feel the effects of the concealed enmity of those who insinuate, speak and act in secret against me, from unhappy prejudices which were easily excited, but which can never be removed from the weak minds or mistaken views of those who indulge them.

As early as June, 1809, I presented a petition to the honourable the general assembly of Maryland stating, that from the first introduction of the Kine Pock into this state, I had bestowed a great portion of my time,

in the practice and improvement of Vaccination; and that I had incurred various expences of considerable amount, as well to preserve this matter, as to extend its benefits through every part of the state. That I had established and conducted a Vaccine Institution from the spring of 1802; and that it was continued and supported solely at the expence of my own personal exertions. That in this way, the Vaccine Matter had been preserved without any interruption, and that from me, it had been distributed annually to the Physicians of this and other states; of all which I then exhibited certificates and undeniable proofs, to the perfect satisfaction of the Legislature. My Institution however, was a novel one, and but few persons comprehended its use. The multitude paid no attention to it; while the few who were inimical towards it, viewed my efforts with a jealous eye, and often misrepresented my operations that thereby they might with more certainty counteract them. I knew my own weakness and liability to err, and therefore addressed myself to the Legislature, as one who was fully sensible that the exertion of any individual, on such an occasion would be insufficient, if left alone to combat the prejudices, the folly, the selfishness and weakness existing in the community. It was on these accounts, that I prayed the general assembly to bestow their sanction to my Vaccine Institution, and to grant such support to my exertions, as would enable me to carry into full effect a plan which I had suggested, for the more certain and speedy extirpation of the Small Pox, which was then epidemic and was occasioning a serious mortality in many parts of the state.

That no member of the Legislature might mistake my views on a subject so intimately connected with the welfare and security of my fellow citizens, I published a full exposition of them, and gave a copy to every individual who had a seat in the house of Delegates or in the Senate. In thus giving my plans in detail, I stated explicitly, that if they were approved of and patronised by the Legislature, I would give ample

security to the state, that the genuine Vaccine Matter should be effectually preserved without any interruption, as long as the state would pay me such compensation, as would enable me to do so. It was on these conditions only, that I could offer to furnish the genuine Vaccine Matter, to every physician or other citizen of the state, at all times when applied for, *free of expence*; and that whenever it was requested, I would give such directions with the matter as would put it in the power of any intelligent person, to use it with safety; so that in cases where it was impracticable or inconvenient to employ a physician, private citizens themselves who could read and write, might conduct the process of Vaccination with safety: and thereby save their own families from the Small Pox, should they think proper to perform this operation themselves. Many fatal accidents had previously occurred in the hands of regular practitioners of medicine, as well as with private citizens, in consequence of their taking improper matter from the sore arms of persons who were vaccinated: and it was supposed that there were but few individuals, at that time, competent to distinguish with certainty, various spurious and fallacious kinds of infection, from the genuine Vaccine Virus, which only could afford the security sought for. On this account, I offered to pay a strict regard to prevent the adulteration of the Vaccine Matter, from any cause of defection to which it might be liable, and engaged to test its efficacy from time to time, and candidly communicate to the publick, every information relative to its use or abuse, as often as their interest or safety should require it.

It was on these principles and with these views that I first proposed to act under legislative authority, and to use my best exertions to extirpate the Small Pox from among our citizens. The compensation I had offered to accept of for these services, including every expence to be incurred, was *one thousand dollars per annum*. A bill was accordingly introduced at the June

session of 1809, and was agreed to, by a large majority of the house Delegates : but it was unfortunately negatived in the Senate, on the principle, it was whispered, that the sum proposed, was too much to be given for the services offered to be performed. The bill was therefore lost, and there was no appropriation made to aid my Institution, or to carry the plan I had proposed into effect. This refusal however, on the part of the state to assist me, with the sanction of their approbation, or to give me the means requisite to enable me prosecute my endeavours to lessen the evils, which our fellow citizens were then suffering from the Small Pox did not dishearten me, but I doubled my diligence and took such steps to encourage Vaccination, as were within the controul of my own limited means.

At the November session following, my application to the Legislature was again renewed ; and to meet the idea of the Senate, I offered to conduct the Institution for the purpose already mentioned, for *three years* without any other pecuniary aid from the treasury than one payment of *one thousand dollars*, which I wished to be to be paid to me in advance ; upon my giving sufficient security, that in case I should die, or fail to comply with my engagements, the whole sum advanced should be repaid to the state, or such proportionable part thereof, as might be due for any part of the three years for which the citizens of Maryland might be thus deprived of the supply of the Vaccine Matter I was to furnish. As the pecuniary compensation which I was to receive, was so trifling in amount, I solicited the Legislature to grant me the privilege to raise by Lottery, the sum of \$30,000 ; part of the proceeds of which was to be applied, to defray the expence of vaccinating a number of the citizens of this state, for whom I was to perform this operation *free of any charge*. It was from persons vaccinated in this way, that I hoped I should be able to obtain the matter, which I was to select, and furnish for the use

of others who would apply to me for it : and the residue of any profits which might arise from the Lottery. I proposed should be applied to the purchase of a piece of ground, whereon a building should be erected, to be held for ever as publick property, for the purpose of a Vaccine Institution, for the use of the State of Maryland. But the same unwillingness, which prevailed in June on the part of the Senate, to favour my propositions was discovered still existing, and I soon found the whole section which proposed to appropriate any money from the Treasury, to support my institution, was struck out and obliterated from further consideration. The *Lottery section* of the bill was the only part of it which was left ; and a total change of its application from every purpose, for which it had been proposed by me, was introduced in lieu of the section which had been stricken out of it. In the bill as passed, I was required to give bond with approved security, that I would use my best exertion to furnish the Vaccine Matter, and to give directions for its use to any citizen who might apply to me for it ; and if I could be paid out of the proceeds of the Lottery it was well ; If nothing could be realised out of the Lottery (which was the most probable presumption, and was then known to be the case as regarded other Lotteries, which had been granted :) the generosity of the state was content with securing my obligation to serve the citizens of Maryland for *six years*, and to leave me without any remuneration whatever. It was in this shape that the bill authoring a Lottery for the preservation and distribution of the Vaccine Matter, for the use of the citizens of this state, passed the Legislature, and became a law.

I ought perhaps to have declined accepting of this generous offer of my native state ; and to have relinquished every plan I had formed, which required any support beyond the means within my own controul. But I was too ardent in the cause I had embarked, and

preferred risking the hard earnings of fifteen years exertion in the practice of Medicine, rather than abandon an Institution, which I had established, and cherished from its commencement as the offspring of my own industry ; and from which I beleived, that the community would in the end derive advantages far exceeding in value any sacrifices I could make.

I lost no time therefore to consult with the managers, who were appointed to institute the Lottery, and without, whose aid, and support the privilege granted to me was of no value whatever. I found them unanimously friendly to my views, and they were willing, without any other motives, than a sense of justice to me, and a wish to serve the publick, to give me every assistance in their power. They encouraged me to make an effort to raise the funds authorised, and to continue my Institution, which they agreed with me would be highly useful to the publick. To the mannagers of this Lottery, therefore, more than to any laudable agency of the Legislature of Maryland, do the citizens of this state now owe that security which we enjoy from the Small-Pox ; and it is to them, as humble but worthy agents, in the direction of the unerring designs of Providence, that we should be grateful for the *general knowledge* respecting the use of the true Kine Pock, which now so generally prevails in this state. A knowledge which has already purified our atmosphere, and expelled a noxious pestilence from the state of Maryland ; a plague that for nearly a century before had annually carried so many of our citizens to their graves.

As soon as the mannagers had given the usual bond for the punctual payment of Prizes, and I had given the security which was required of me to insure the faithful performance of the task I had undertaken, we proposed such a scheme as we thought most likely to gain the publick approbation and support. To render my Institution, however, still more extensively useful, and to gain thereby additional support ; I determined

to encrease my exertions and proposed to extend its benefits to the citizens of Pennsylvania generally, and to individuals in other states, provided they would give us their aid in completing our Lottery. With these views I presented a memorial to the Legislature of Pennsylvania, and appointed agents, who where friendly to my plans in the states of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and in other distant places, to all of whom I furnished the vaccine remedy with directions how to use it, free of any costs or charges. I was thus enabled to distribute nearly one third of our Lottery Tickets, and to place them in the hands of gentlemen, who felt every disposition I could wish to promote my views, and to aid the managers to bring the Lottery to a favourable issue. The Lottery, however had not progressed far, before a very unexpected opposition to our scheme rose up against us, and which threatened not to only ruin me, but seriously to injure my friends. The same Legislature, which had with so much generosity, given permission to raise \$30,000 to defray the expences of my Institution, which I was to conduct, without any other support whatever, for six years, for the benefit of the citizens of this state, granted likewise a similar privilege at the same session, to raise \$100,000 to erect a monument to the revered name of Washington. A very numerous, and respectable list of managers had been appointed to carry this law into effect, and they soon determined to make use of the privilege granted to them. The scheme of the Vaccine Lottery had been much approved of, and when the managers of the Washington Lottery met to fix upon their scheme, they copied the Vaccine nearly verbatim, adding only a few more thousand Tickets which enabled them to offer a greater capital prize, and to give their Lottery a decided preference to ours with persons who wished to become adventurers. Two schemes of the same kind, at the same time, and in the same place, it

soon found could not be supported; the managers of the Vaccine Lottery were, therefore, after spending a whole year in efforts, now became worse than fruitless, compelled to abandon their scheme entirely, and to redeem again all the Tickets they had distributed. This was a work of great trouble and expense, but we deemed it more proper to return their money to those who had purchased Tickets from us than to retain it in our hands for any uncertain period of time to which we could set no probable limits. This work of necessity and justice was, therefore, set about on the 9th of April, 1811: and as soon as the Tickets were called in, the money was returned and they were all fairly redeemed. My privilege to raise \$30,000, now appeared to be worse than mere delusive hope. It was of no real value, but retained the appearance of a liberal reward from the State, for services which I was rendering, and for the faithful performance of which I was bound for nearly five years of time then unexpired. In this perplexing situation, I would most cheerfully have given up every dollar I possessed, to have been fairly released, and my friends relieved from the burthen of the generous reward allowed for my services by the Legislature of Maryland. It was in vain, however, to complain. I had made the contract, and must be content to abide the consequences.

I would here ask if any like instance can be found among the proceedings of any legislative body in this or any other country; and whether my case does not afford the only example extant, of any public servant whose salary or reward for necessary services was required to be paid by way of Lottery. If the State of Maryland had been a bankrupt State, and the security of her citizens from a dangerous disease could not have been procured in any other way than by a Lottery, then there might be some apology offered for a Senate who could invent this new mode of promoting the general welfare. As the Treasury of the State, however was an abundant one, I defy the most contracted economist

to find any reasonable apology, for binding me to serve the state for so many years, in a business so interesting to every individual in the community, and yet that I should not be entitled to a cent for my services unless I could make it myself out of the proceeds of a Lottery !

When the Vaccine Lottery was rendered abortive by the publication of the more brilliant Scheme proposed by the managers of the Washington Monument Lottery, as has been just stated, the embarrassment of my situation, and the difficulties in which my friends were placed, may be more easily conceived than I can describe them. Letters had to be written to many and to very distant parts of the United States, upon which I had to pay a very heavy postage, as well as also upon all the packets of Tickets which had to be returned to me. My time and money were both in this way profusely wasted. One expedient only presented itself to me which could release us from the dilemma in which we were extricated. To avoid ruin to myself and family, and to prevent my friends from suffering any loss, very naturally occupied my most serious attention. I therefore proposed to the managers that in abandoning our original Scheme, we should divide it into two classes; the first class to consist of one third, and the second class to consist of two thirds of the amount of the old Scheme. The purchasers of old Tickets to be allowed to exchange them for new ones in either one or in both classes as they pleased; or if they should prefer it to an exchange, the holders of the old Tickets were solicited to return them and take back their money. The unavoidable expense attendant upon this change of our Scheme was very great, and while it occupied a great portion of my time, it threatened to involve us in more costs than the profits of the Lottery when completed was likely to repay me. That the managers, however, might be secured against any losses which might be sustained in this business, I gave them a mortgage on my private property, being determined that if I should be ruined by having so imprudently accepted of

the generous gift of our Legislature, they should not bear any part of the loss while I had wherewith to pay it. That portion of my time, therefore, which I had previously, and for so many years successfully devoted to the practice of my profession, had now to be almost entirely withdrawn from it, and I was forced to bestow my attention chiefly to the management of a hopeless Lottery concern.

I have not stated these facts with a view to urge any complaint whatever, nor to solicit you to make good any deficiency of my compensation; but I have stated them with candour that they may be more generally made known, and that the public may form a just estimate of the extent to which the generosity of the State of Maryland has been exercised towards me in the patronage given to my Institution. From the precarious support, however, which I received, I am happy to inform you that I was enabled to carry into effect the plan which I had proposed for the more speedy extirpation of the Small Pox; *a task which I have since faithfully and successfully executed. And there is not one single case of Small Pox, [I have reason to believe,] at this time in the State of Maryland.*

To conclude my letter, however, which I fear has already exhausted your patience, I have only to state, that after innumerable vexations, many of which unavoidably resulted from giving credit on sales of Tickets to persons who did not possess any just sense of their obligations to pay for them, the first class of our Lottery was completed on the 6th Nov. 1811, and yielded a nett profit of *three thousand one hundred and ninety-nine dollars, and thirty cents* after all the prizes were paid. The Second Class was commenced as soon as was practicable, and was carried through by the same perseverance and industry which completed the First. So that after four years toil and trouble in the winding up this concern, the Vaccine Lotteries eventuated in a nett gain from both classes of *twelve thousand seven hundred and ninety seven dollars and twenty cents*, for

which sum I have given credit to the managers as for so much paid to me out of the sum proposed to be allowed by the Legislature for my services in procuring and distributing the Vaccine matter, free of any costs to the citizens of this State, for the six years which I engaged to serve, including all expenses incurred by me in printing, stationary, &c. as well as for providing a suitable building for the purposes of the Institution for the period of time contemplated by the General Assembly for its continuance.

I have taken the opinion of *Luther Martin, esq.* on the several points of the act of assembly, relating to the Vaccine Institution, respecting which any doubts could have been entertained, by the most scrupulous, and have inclosed the same to the Honourable Committee, to whom my memorial has been referred. Having fortunately preserved them, I have likewise been enabled to forward to the committee for their examination, the original bills which were framed with my approbation, as has been already stated, at the June and November sessions, 1809, but which were afterwards altered to form the law entitled "An Act authorising a lottery for the preservation and distribution of the vaccine matter for the use of the citizens of this State."

I have the honour to remain,

With considerations of the highest respect,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JAMES SMITH.

GENERAL VACCINE INSTITUTION,

BALTIMORE, 1st Jan. 1818.

LETTER

II.

HAVING in my first letter fully explained the proceedings of the legislature of Maryland relative to my Vaccine Institution; and having further shewn the manner in which the law of November session, 1809, was carried into operation, I will endeavour to give you some account of the dangers to which the good people of this state were formerly exposed; and what were their sufferings from the Small Pox, before as well as since a free access to the Vaccine remedy was provided for them. I will likewise state to you some other facts which may be interesting on this occasion.

Before the introduction of the kine pock into the United States, the Small Pox prevailed more uniformly perhaps in the state of Maryland, than any other part of our country. We had no laws, as in some other states, to prohibit its introduction, and for nearly a century, the variolous inoculation had been practised among us, almost every year to a great extent. In no part of the world was this practice ever more common or more regularly engaged in, *every spring of the year*, than in the neighbourhood of Baltimore. The most approved methods of inoculation had been early introduced from Europe; and was practised throughout the state with great success, by many eminent and distinguished physicians. The names of Stephenson, Weisenthall, Haslett, Littlejohn, Pue, Parnham, Mitchell, Archer, and many others will long be remembered for their invaluable services, in conducting many of us safely over that dangerous ford we had to pass by inoculation. This practice, however, had the effect of keeping up an unextinguished flame of this contagion; and the Small Pox was thereby propagated, in the natural way, every year; sometimes to a greater and sometimes to a lesser extent. It seldom ceased, but was continually seizing upon the careless and unprotected, deforming the face of beauty, preying upon our children, and putting to death an immense number of the citizens of this state.

There are few perhaps of the honourable members of the General Assembly, I am now addressing, who do not well remember the dreadful mortality, which was formerly oc-

casioned every year, by this disease, in the state of Maryland. The page of American history can likewise inform us, what were the sufferings, which our armies sustained during the war of the revolution; and how many of the brave men, who had left their families to purchase our liberties, in the field of battle sickened, and perished under the tortures of this plague. Although the old inoculation, therefore, had its advantages; and those who were willing to incur the risk, generally derived an important benefit from it; yet upon the whole, it increased rather than diminished the calamity of Small Pox: and our bills of mortality were greatly augmented by it.

Before the discovery of the Kine Pock by Jenner, it was estimated, that upwards of *forty thousand* persons died, annually, of Small Pox in Great Britain and Ireland alone: and that from the population of Europe, *fifteen millions* of persons were cut off by this plague, within the short space of twenty-five years preceding the era of Vaccination. The greatest devastations of our yellow fever, which excite so much terror at home and abroad, can bear no comparison with this mortality; the prevalence, indeed, to any considerable extent of this *high degree of bilious fever*, so terrible in name and often times so destructive in fact, has always been literally confined, as it regards the United States, to a few large cities or populous towns, and sometimes to certain circumscribed parts of these places, where local causes have been found to exist, favourable to the production of the peculiar poisonous matters which cause it. But the Small Pox is a much more dangerous and fatal disease—it is truly and undeniably a *contagious pestilence*, whose infecting matter or miasma is communicated from person to person; and which can never be originated except from a human body, infected with the same specific disease. When this miasma, however, is once set afloat, among any dense population liable to take it, it catches like a rapid and consuming fire upon a parcel of the most combustible materials, sparing neither the rich nor the poor, but spending its infuriate rage, alike upon every individual, in every situation: and none can escape it with any certainty, except those who have sought for safety under the hands of an inoculator; or who, placing more confidence in the bounty of heaven, make use of that certain protection from it, which is now to be obtained by vaccination.

When the old and dangerous mode of inoculation was practised here, as already mentioned, it was much resorted to; but since a far superior and more safe practice has been introduced in lieu of it, many persuade themselves, that this "new invention" can be of no value. The prevalence of such opinions among us, would at first view appear to be so unreasonable, that if we did not know they were actually entertained by many persons, we would not believe, that any people who are liable to suffer so much by Small Pox, could be found so insensible of the blessings we enjoy in the possession of a certain remedy to prevent it, as we are. If some immediate dangers from Small Pox does not press upon us, it is impossible to excite the attention of the common mass of people to make any use of the Kine Pock whatever. An obstinate want of faith in it, on the part of the ignorant and superstitious; and an unaccountable carelessness on the part of those who are better informed, seem every where indeed to prevail, with regard to this remedy. This carelessness more than any other cause, has already excited the apprehensions of some very distinguished physicians in this state, who have addressed letters to me respecting it; and who complain that "when they have attempted the experiment, they could not find a sufficient number of persons willing to submit to vaccination, on any terms, from whom they could keep up a supply of the vaccine matter, even for a short time, for their own use." But this difficulty does not exist in Maryland alone, it is justly complained of as applicable to every part of the United States; and except, perhaps, in this city and in the cities of Philadelphia and New-York, (where there are so many practitioners alternately using it) there is no place to be found in America, where a constant supply of the genuine vaccine matter is kept up from one year to another. The most judicious physicians, have likewise expressed their fears, that vaccination, from this cause, and no other, may be yet felt, at some future day, as a curse rather than a blessing upon the community. These are melancholy forebodings to be yet fulfilled; but we cannot escape them, if the practice of vaccination should become more generally neglected for a few years; and we should be again visited by the Small Pox, at a moment when we are not in possession of active vaccine matter. Some persons may nevertheless persuade themselves that an accident of this kind could not possibly happen. I can assure you, however, that

t is not only possible, but it is extremely probable that accidents of this kind will happen: and as far as the case can apply to individual families, in the state of Maryland and in other places, I know that they have occurred; and that many persons have suffered extremely in this way. The most lamentable accidents of this kind also, have frequently occurred in other countries, particularly in the West Indies, and in different parts of South America, from whence applications have been made to this Institution for a supply of the vaccine matter, at times when the Small Pox was actually destroying their people, and no remedy could be procured by them to prevent it. But we need not go abroad to search for distressing examples or to learn the effects which must result from this inexcusable carelessness with respect to the use of the Kine Pock. For it is certain that many fatal accidents of this kind have lately been witnessed with terror and dismay in various parts of the United States. And at no period of time since the first introduction of the Kine Pock, has the Small Pox produced a greater mortality, or more suffering in our country, than has actually happened during the last year past.

There was indeed a period of time, about the commencement of the year 1815, when the prevalence of Small Pox appears to have been confined to very narrow limits. It was known to exist in the United States only "at the Military Hospital of Governor's Island," where it is stated, in a report now before me, of the medical faculty of New-York, to have been discovered in the month of February; but so little notice was taken of it, and so perfectly careless of the consequences were all those who ought to have felt some concern about it, that it was suffered to be propagated without any active opposition, until it became a terrible and destructive plague; not only in the city and state of New-York, but in every direction around them. It is a fact, that from this source, the Small Pox was afterwards spread abroad, until it has since pervaded nearly the whole of the United States; and it is now prevailing in many places from which I am daily receiving applications for the Vaccine remedy to arrest its progress, and to relieve our affrighted citizens. In the same way through our extreme negligence has this plague been carried abroad by our ships and introduced into foreign ports; by which means we have inflicted (in the most unjustifiable manner) the tor-

ments of the Small Pox upon many other people, with whom we are connected by our commerce and navigation.

What an heavenly opportunity existed, at the commencement of this plague, to have put the monster to death in the city of New-York, and to have saved our country from the incalculable injuries which we have since sustained! The Kine Pock, in the hands of any one attentive citizen who would *at that time* have made a proper use of it, might have saved the lives of all those who have since been swept off in our view by the Small Pox, and who are now lost forever to their country and to their friends. But there was no individual or society possessed of a just sense of the approaching danger, to give the alarm. Ostentatious Philanthropy was asleep, and there was no one to throw "a single bucket of water to extinguish the flame," though it commenced at noon day, and in the public view. No seasonable effort was made by any one; but this plague was allowed to take its natural course, and it spread abroad, daily encreasing its fury.

When this awful calamity, however, had continued for more than a year, viz. on the first day of April, 1816, and when by the accounts which were published, it appeared that ONE THOUSAND AND ONE HUNDRED of the citizens of New-York had nearly lost their lives by it; and that TWO HUNDRED AND NINETY THREE PERSONS HAD DIED OF THIS PLAGUE, within the limits of the same city! a committee of learned physicians are called together, to make a report on the "EPIDEMIC SMALL POX;" which report being "read and approved," was ordered to be published by the Medical Society of New-York, that we might not be left untaught; but be fully instructed in their new way of accounting for the calamity which had befallen their city. These physicians, after stating that they were "inclined to believe" that "the Small Pox was introduced from some distant place, by means of trading or coasting vessels," very gravely proceed to inform us, "that the violent south east storm of the 24th September, 1815, which ravaged such an extensive range of the North American coast, was followed by an uncommonly prevalent and severe epidemic catarrh, somewhat similar to the influenza of former years, and which extended to almost every part of the United States." But mistaking entirely the TRUE CAUSE OF THE CALAMITY, whose origin and extent they had been appointed to investigate, they content themselves with a modest display of

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their own "novel doctrine," informing us how influential the peculiar character of this stormy period was, in propagating the contagion of Small Pox!!!” Had I not before me an authentic copy of this report, I could not have believed, that the respectable individuals whose names are attached to it, would have sanctioned such an account to be published with their signatures. “The report,” however, I hope will not do any great injury; and I have laid it aside with this inscription, “How short is our foresight, and how imperfect the knowledge we possess!” And I beg these gentlemen, should any of them ever see this imperfect letter, to exercise the same degree of candour and forgiveness towards my errors and weakness.

Since the date of the act of our assembly, passed at November session, 1809, (and which I believe was the first legislative act passed in relation to the use of the Kine Pock, in any part of the United States.) The natural Small Pox has been repeatedly introduced into the city of Baltimore, and into other parts of the state of Maryland, but it has always been immediately extinguished, (except on one occasion, which will be duly noticed) without doing us any serious injury, or being suffered to extend beyond our control.

In the month of March, 1810, information was lodged at the Vaccine Institution, that the natural Small Pox had been introduced into Baltimore county near to the Pennsylvania line, and that all those who had been previously vaccinated in that part of the country, were, notwithstanding, still found liable to take it—that the people were greatly alarmed, and that the physicians of the neighbourhood had re-commenced the old inoculation again. Being certain that some mistake had been made, I left home without delay, and commenced in person, an immediate examination of the facts which then seemed to threaten such serious consequences. I found that the most severe threats had been offered against any one, who should again attempt to introduce vaccination into that neighbourhood; and that the most violent prejudices had been raised up against its supporters. I was soon able, however, to trace the cause of all the accidents which had occurred, to their proper source; and found that a spurious kind of matter had been used there, which produced no other effect than a deceptive soreness of the arm. A general meeting of the people became adviseable, as likely to afford the most certain opportunity to explain

the cause of their sufferings, and to prevent any further increase of the calamity which threatened them. This meeting was therefore invited with as little delay as possible. Many people attended, and it was clearly proven to their satisfaction, that they had been entirely deceived, and did not know what the true Kine Pock was. Their anxiety to use this remedy, now became as great as their opposition to it before had been severe. I now had a favourable opportunity to distribute the vaccine matter among them, with my directions how it should be used. I also offered my services to vaccinate free of any charge, all who were willing to have the operation performed by me. I afterwards paid them several visits to keep up their confidence, and to gain new converts, as well as to assist them in the work they had commenced. The most happy results soon ensued from these proceedings—the public confidence was restored in vaccination, and the Small Pox contagion was extirpated from among the people, affording me the satisfaction to have secured with my own hand, nearly one thousand of the citizens of Maryland and Pennsylvania from the danger to which they had been exposed.

About the middle of July in the same year, (1810) a young woman who resided in Eutaw-street, and a young man who resided in the precincts of this city were both discovered to have taken the natural Small Pox, and without any knowledge or suspicion of the source from whence they had caught it. It afterwards, however, appeared, that the contagion had been brought into the city, by a traveller who had caught it coming through Frederick county in Virginia. But that, in accordance with the private interest of the tavern keeper, at whose house he lay, the nature of his case was concealed; so that the contagion of Small Pox had actually existed for nearly a month, in a populous part of our city, before it was publicly known. The alarm, however, was now sounded; and the people were advised to resort to vaccination immediately; and by the uncommon efforts on the part of the physicians generally, as well as by several private citizens, who were supplied by me with genuine matter, this loathsome contagion was soon expelled again from our city; but not before several families who had been infected while the source of the mischief lay concealed, suffered extremely from it. It is worthy of recollection, that when I was first called to visit the young woman whose case so justly excited our alarm, I found her to be in the *seventh*

day of her disease, and that she was covered from head to foot with innumerable eruptions of the natural Small Pox. There was scarce a dwelling in the neighbourhood where she lay, but contained several persons liable to take it; I also found that she had seven brothers and sisters living in the same room with her; and that the intercourse had been constant and uninterrupted between them, from the first commencement of the disease. It was feared that too much time had been already lost. Their parents were adverse to inoculation of any kind; but I prevailed on them to let me try the effect of the vaccine matter, which, if it should happen to be inserted too late, could not possibly do them any injury: before I left the room, therefore, I inserted the vaccine remedy for them in both arms, using different vaccine crusts to increase my chance of success. The pecuniary circumstances of the family did not admit of the expense of removing any of these children to uninfected lodgings; they were, therefore, obliged to remain in the same exposed situation where they were. A part of them slept every night, and they all eat their food daily in the same room where their diseased sister lay. All my operations fortunately succeeded at the first attempt. *Every one of the children took the Kine Pock, and they were all saved from the Small Pox, without suffering any sickness, or sustaining any injury whatever.*

After inserting the vaccine matter for this afflicted family, the next step to be taken, was to distribute this all saving remedy, as generally as possible through the neighbourhood. Every dwelling house was visited without delay; and every person residing in that part of the city was informed of the existence of the Small Pox among them. Those who had not been previously secured, were recommended to submit to vaccination as speedily as possible. The Small Pox was, in this manner, within a few days, completely insulated; and it did not communicate to any other person in the neighbourhood of this family.

As in Eutaw-street, so also in the neighbourhood of the young man who had caught the same disease, and lay in the precincts of the city. His neighbours until now had been very careless about the Kine Pock, and either disbelieved the account they had heard respecting it, or affected to be altogether incredulous as to its efficacy. The alarm, however, which was soon excited, and the near approach of danger, which they observed, and knew not otherwise how to

escape, created all at once an uncommon degree of confidence in vaccination. Every one was eager to try it as soon as possible, so that about one hundred persons, all of whom were living near enough to this case of Small Pox, to have been infected by it in a few days, immediately submitted to vaccination. By this process, they were all saved from any injury, and the Small Pox was prevented from spreading any further.

From this time, until the month of January following, our city was perfectly free from this contagion, when it was again unhappily imported by a groom, attached to the Circus, who had received the infection in Philadelphia, and brought it hither with him. His fever was at first supposed to be the spotted fever; its true character was notwithstanding afterwards fully ascertained. His death, it is said, took place about the 20th January; but no information was given respecting the nature of the disease. The coloured servant boy however, who attended on him, took sick on the 5th day of February, and his disease was soon discovered to be the natural Small Pox; he died on the 15th of the same month. I was then absent from this city, vainly endeavouring to persuade the legislature of Pennsylvania to pass an act for the more general distribution of the vaccine matter in that state. The favourable moment to have checked the spreading of this disease, was suffered to pass unheeded—every necessary precaution was neglected from the beginning. As soon as I returned from Pennsylvania, however, I immediately set about tracing the origin and extent of the injury which had been done; and on the 5th of March, I was the first to sound the alarm, or to inform the public of the introduction of the Small Pox into this city. Seven cases of this plague were then discovered, and as I conceived it to be my duty, I published the names and places of residence of all of them, and informed the citizens, that all who wanted the vaccine matter, could be supplied with this remedy free of any charge. My publication, however, instead of producing the desired effect, or rousing up every citizen to make an immediate effort to extinguish a flame, which had already caught in so many different parts of our city, had quite another, and an unexpected effect. Some thought my publication would be “injurious to the city,” and that it would prevent the people from the country coming to market,” others threw out their surmise, “that I wished to excite an alarm” from the most despicable motive of wishing to “gain custom to my vaccine

office." The columns of our newspapers soon became swelled with criticisms; and learned doctors spent their time in abusing me, instead of exercising their talents in proper efforts to extinguish the contagion which was afloat in our city; a plague which afterwards continued for *more than twelve months* to increase our bills of mortality, beyond every former example. It may be fairly computed, that above ONE THOUSAND PERSONS residing in this city suffered, during that period, an attack of Small Pox. *One hundred and sixty-five deaths* from it, are at that era, entered on our records for Baltimore alone; but if this calamity could be traced in all its ramifications to the country, and elsewhere, no one could compute the amount of injury, which was suffered in consequence of a few days fatal neglect, at the commencement of that epidemic. For the methods to which we finally resorted, to extirpate this contagion, I beg leave to refer you to the proceedings of the Baltimore Jennerian Society which have been already published. They are such as I have always advised, and if resorted to at any time with energy and industry, will, I have no doubt, extirpate the Small Pox from any place wherever it may exist.

While the Small Pox was prevailing in the month of February, 1812, an oysterman who came here, was unfortunately seized with it and died on board of his boat, after he had arrived in the Patuxent. His comrade being alarmed for his own safety, left the boat and sought a refuge in the country. He asked for lodgings and was permitted to stay all night, at the house of Mr. *Francis Wolf* in Calvert county; but he gave no intimation to the family, that he had been in any situation from whence he could have brought the Small Pox with him. Mr. Wolf was upwards of eighty years of age, a respectable farmer who lived in so retired a part of the country, that if any one on earth had reason to depend upon an escape from the Small Pox, for his few remaining years, Mr. Wolf was certainly the person who might have hoped for such an exemption. He took sick of this plague, however, on the 10th, and died on the 19th of February. The nature of his disease unfortunately was not ascertained before his death, either by himself, his physician, his attendants or friends. And from him the Small Pox was communicated to many of his old acquaintances, who had come to see him during his illness. Their melancholy fate, as well as the distress which this accident oc-

casioned throughout the whole county of Calvert, will long be remembered by many who suffered on that occasion.

At that time, besides Mr. *Francis Wolf*, there died of Small Pox,

<i>John Yoe,</i>	aged 64 years,	died	March 3d.
<i>Joseph Strickland,</i>	" 45 do.	"	March 11th.
<i>John Kent,</i>	" 50 do.	"	March 14th.
<i>Elias Wolf,</i>	" 50 do.	"	March 18th.
<i>Richard Hanse,</i>	" 63 do.	"	March 18th.
<i>Benjamin Hanse,</i>	" 50 do.	"	March 20th.
<i>William Yoe,</i>	" 13 do.	"	March 26th.

There were many others who perished by this accident, but I have no particular record of their names and ages. As soon as I heard of the distressed situation of these people, and that they had not a particle of the vaccine matter among them, I made use of the opportunity to visit a part of the state in which I was an entire stranger; I was also ignorant whether they were friendly or adverse to vaccination. If they were acquainted with the use of the Kine Pock, I knew they would be rejoiced to receive it, and if opposed to this remedy, I flattered myself I should be able to persuade them to accept of it from me. I therefore carried with me a plentiful supply of matter, which was fresh and active; and invited meetings of the people in different parts of the county, where I attended to vaccinate some, and to instruct others how to use this remedy, which I gave them for their families. The kindness and hospitality with which I was received and treated, will never be forgotten by me, and I shall always remember with great satisfaction, the happy relief which I was able to afford the inhabitants of this county, by my visit. There was no objection made to the use of the Kine Pock by any one, but every family flew to it, as to a guardian angel for protection, and the Small Pox was soon extirpated from among them.

From the memorable spring of 1812, after we had completely cleared our atmosphere from this contagion, and we had but few citizens remaining, who were susceptible of its action, we remained perfectly secure from danger, until the month of January, 1816, when a child by the name of *JOHN E. HICKS*, took it in Great-York-street. *Nearly four years had elapsed without one case of the Small Pox appearing in the city of Baltimore;* and at first, no one could tell from whence this child, (who had not been out of the house in

which it lay for two months) could possibly have derived the infection. The case seemed greatly to favour an opinion which was advanced, and is still entertained by some, that this contagion may originate of *itself*, in the human system, and consequently, that our efforts to destroy it, must be for ever perfectly nugatory and vain. I consider this doctrine however, as altogether unphilosophical and unfounded in fact; but shall not make any attempt to refute it at this time. Suffice is to state, that after some days had elapsed, it was discovered that the contagion had been again brought from Philadelphia by a man, who had been lately there, and who was then laying ill of the Small Pox *nearly half a mile distant* from the child who was nevertheless infected from him. As soon as the Small Pox was discovered on the child Hicks, public notice was given of the fact, and an immediate effort was made to prevent the disease spreading, by vaccinating every person residing in or near to the infected house. Although the weather was bad, and I was so unwell that I would not have went out of my house, on any occasion which could be avoided, I notwithstanding visited within three days every family in the neighbourhood, apprizing the uninformed of their danger, offering the vaccine matter to those who wanted it, advising the rich to send for their physicians, and vaccinating every poor person I could find, who was likely to be exposed to the contagion. It may be considered by some as vain boasting on my part, to mention these circumstances; and I would be glad to pass them over in silence, but I deem it necessary to waive every personal consideration, on this occasion; that the people by knowing what has been done, may learn what is essentially necessary to be done, if we would prevent the rekindling of this contagion at another time; and again witnessing the same fatal scenes which took place in this city in 1812, and in New-York in 1815.

In adverting to the history of our escape at this time from the Small Pox, it may be proper to state to you, that a most unjustifiable attempt was made by a practitioner of this city, to carry the contagion of the Small Pox from this case, and to infect therewith *privately as regarded the neighbourhood, and deceptiously, as respected its parents*, the child of Mr. S. C. Leakin, who resided on Fell's Point; a part of the city, then perfectly free from this malignant disease, but which contained many hundred persons who were liable to be destroy-

ed by it. It pleased the Almighty, however, that this wicked attempt should be frustrated, and although the variolous matter was inserted in the child's arm, the operation failed to take effect. This child was afterwards vaccinated by Dr. Samuel Martin, and passed regularly through the vaccine process, of which I have a correct history now in my possession. Would it not be proper in the legislature to interdict by their authority such offences in future; or at least to make such provision as will effectually prevent hereafter the concealment of any case of Small Pox among us, whether the infection be derived in the natural way, or by inoculation?

The next case of Small Pox which threatened to infect our city was that of a boy in the month of June, 1816, who had arrived from Norfolk, where the small Pox had been previously derived from New-York, and was then prevailing. The diseased boy lay ill on Fell's Point, in Argyle-Alley, where he was surrounded by hundreds of persons liable to be infected from him. There were, also, two families (containing in the whole seven persons) who were susceptible of this plague, living in the same house where he lay; one of these exposed persons was near to seventy years of age. Dr. William H. Clendinen applied immediately to me for the vaccine matter, and inserted it in all their arms. The public were again fully apprised of the existence of this contagion among us. Drs. Connor, Martin, Allender, and others, who resided near at hand were supplied with active matter, and the same steps were taken which had been heretofore so successfully resorted to. The intercourse between the diseased boy and those who had been just vaccinated, was unavoidably continued—they all, however, took the Kine Pock, and sustained no injury whatever, by their constant exposure to the Small Pox.

There was a black woman, however, named Prudence, who was not so fortunate; she had been many years before inoculated for the Small Pox, and did not suppose herself to be in any danger of taking it. She was, therefore, easily induced to take the diseased boy's infected cloathing to wash, and from them she caught the Small Pox, and very narrowly escaped with her life.

From Prudence the contagion was again communicated to a black man, the slave of Mr. Samuel Kane, of Queen Ann's county, who did not stand the attack very long, but died after he had become most horribly offensive and disfigured. In the course of a few days there were vaccinated on

this occasion upwards of *five hundred persons*, all residing near enough to the infected Alley to have soon become diseased of the Small Pox.

To this speedy resort perhaps to vaccination, we have now to ascribe our narrow escape from a calamity, which would otherwise have spread abroad to an unknown extent, and whose evils would unavoidably have been greatly aggravated to the sufferers, by the warmth of the season.

The citizens of Baltimore having thus escaped again from a desolating plague, remained free of variolous contagion, until it was again imported from Philadelphia,* du-

* *Baltimore, 1st May, 1817.*

TO DR. EDWIN ATLEY,

Dear Sir—I beg leave to communicate to you a circumstance in which I am sure you will feel some interest, and this the more particularly as it has so justly excited a considerable sensation in this city.

On Friday the 4th of last month you vaccinated the youngest child of Henry McCormick, shoemaker, then a resident of Philadelphia. On the 4th of the same month this infant, aged about three months, was brought by its parents into this city. In a few days afterwards its vaccination appearing to have taken effect, it became indisposed and was afflicted with high fever, &c.—On the 12th a numerous eruption of vesicles appeared on its face, body and limbs, which in the end proved to be the Small Pox. The child lived until the 19th April, when it died, covered with this dreadful and loathsome plague. Until it was ascertained that this child had taken the Small Pox it was lodged with its mother at ——— Pepper's in the western precincts of our city; it was immediately thereafter, however, removed to another house; Mr. P. having a young infant then liable to this contagion, vaccination was without further delay performed for Mr. P's. child, and with proper effect; it has escaped the danger to which it was exposed.—But there was in the same family an orphan girl aged about 13 years, who was erroneously supposed to have been vaccinated while she was very young; and unfortunately due care was not taken to test her situation, (as ought always to be practised in cases of this kind) by a repetition of vaccination. The consequence has been that she took the Small Pox from your patient, and is now covered with a very liberal crop of them.

The history of her child's case I this day procured from Mrs. McCormick herself, who expressed to me a just sense of her gratitude to you for your great kindness to her while she lived in Philadelphia, and I was pleased to find that she was very anxious to clear you of the very unpleasant charge naturally imputed to you from the apparent circumstances of the case, that you had given the Small Pox to her child either intentionally or by mistake, instead of the Kine Pock.

After a full investigation of every fact attainable, I assure you sir, my mind is perfectly satisfied that you acted fairly and correctly in vaccinating the child which has lost its life; but the operation was unhappily performed too late. It had certainly received the variolous contagion before you saw it. Mrs. McCormick informs me that previous to your vaccinating her child she had frequently visited one of her neighbours who had the Small Pox, under a mistaken opinion that he had caught the measles. She thus no doubt carried the contagion home to her own infant, and with the very melancholy effect which I have related to you.

ring the last spring. The annexed letters, which were written at the moment, will afford a correct history of the chief circumstances of its introduction.

I will only add that Dr. Handy succeeded in his recommendations, and prevailed on Mrs. Craggs to let her children be vaccinated; and that they all took it and were saved from the Small Pox. Mrs. C. would not submit to vacci-

Many among the lower classes of people here are so deadly insensible to the advantages of vaccination; and it is too much neglected even in the most respectable families, that I have my fears lest this accident may yet occasion the loss of many valuable lives—first by the spreading of this contagious disease among us, and next by our extending it to other places with which we are connected by the busy intercourse of our flourishing commerce and navigation.

With much respect, your obedient servant,

JAMES SMITH.

Baltimore, Sunday Morning, 18th May, 1817:

TO THE REV. MR. GLENDY,

Dear Sir—A circumstance fell under my notice yesterday, which has excited a very particular interest in behalf of a family, with whom your admonitions may, I pray, have more influence, than the unavailing advice which I have endeavoured to give them.

There is now a dangerous case (This is the only case, I believe of Small Pox which exists at this time in this city.) of the natural Small Pox, at Lilly's tavern, corner of Pratt and Paca-streets, in our western precincts, directly opposite to which there lives a Mrs. Craggs, milliner, who has four children, none of whom have ever had this disease; and she is not certain that she has yet had it herself. As soon as I was made acquainted with this case of Small Pox, and of the situation of this family, I called on Mrs. C. to offer her my assistance and to endeavour to persuade her to let me secure the children from the danger to which I found them exposed; but she says, she has no confidence in vaccination, and cannot be prevailed on in any way, to permit this operation to be performed, either for herself, or her children. I need not picture to you the imminent danger in which they all are in at this time, nor yet the injury which the public may sustain by her adhering to her present resolution, to let them take the Small Pox in the natural way. She lives in a very populous neighbourhood, where there are yet many others liable to take it, and on a main street to which almost every stranger who enters or passes out of the city, travelling to or from the south and west, must be exposed. Mrs. C. has indeed listened respectfully and attentively, while I endeavoured to convince her that vaccination is a sacred duty which she in common with every other parent, owes to her young children, who cannot be sensible of any danger of this kind. But as yet it has been to very little purpose, that I have given her my advice. I have not failed, however, to intreat her to think seriously of the present perilous situation of herself and family, nor to ask her how she could excuse herself before her Maker, if in a few weeks hence, from an obstinate adherence to her own opinions, she should find her family visited by this pestilence, and see her children doomed to suffer thereby or perish under the pains of a disease, which she had in her power to avert by the use of a simple remedy, which seems to have been given us, as for some special blessing;

nation herself, but caught the contagion, and very narrowly escaped from it with her life. She was thus taught a very painful, but useful lesson, inasmuch as she found her innocent babes protected in her bosom with the Kine Pock on their arms, while she herself was covered with painful sores, from her head to her feet, suffering, as it were, the just, but merciful chastisement of Heaven for her unyielding obstinacy and unbelief. As every person, however, in this infected neighbourhood, was seasonably and fully acquainted with the existence of the Small Pox, the use of the Kine Pock was immediately and generally resorted to, and the contagion was not further communicated among them. A black man, notwithstanding, who had supposed himself secure by the old inoculation, and who came in from the country to see his wife, then employed about the person of Mrs. C. caught it and narrowly escaped with his life. This man lay ill among a small settlement of people, who lived on the Reiestertown turnpike road, about a mile and an half from this city, and many of them were liable to be in-

but for reasons beyond our weak comprehension, by an all wise and kind providence. But to all this she pleads her want of faith in the Kine Pock, and of a similar scepticism on the part of her husband, who is at this time absent from home, "and who, she fears, would be highly offended if she should permit their children to be vaccinated."

Under all these embarrassments however, a gleam of hope has arisen from my having learnt on enquiry from herself, that she belongs to your congregation, and she has promised me that she would call on you and hear what you would recommend her to do. I do not expect she will call on you before tomorrow; but I shall visit her again to day and see what can be done for her. I feel sanguine that if you could see her soon, we should still be able to render her a greater service than she is aware of; and perhaps while we are serving her children a good turn, we may then prevent the Small Pox getting fully afloat again in this city.

Believe me to be

Your sincere Friend and

Humble Servant,

JAMES SMITH.

Baltimore, Monday Morning, 19th May, 1817.

DR. HANDY,

Dear Sir, I beg you would call on Mrs. Craggs, a milliner, near to Lillys tavern, who has four children liable to take the Small Pox, and they are in great danger; the Small Pox being at Lilly's, in the back building directly opposite to Mrs. C's. This lady has no "faith in vaccination," and I have not been able to persuade her to let me secure her children. She says her husband is acquainted with you, and as I am a perfect stranger to this family, I have begged her to take your advice if she mistrusts mine. I pray you call on her this morning. I think there is no time to be lost in the case.

In haste, your friend,

JAMES SMITH.

fects from him; but upon being warned of their danger, I had no difficulty to persuade them to submit to vaccination, and they all escaped unhurt. Although, therefore, the contagion of the natural Small Pox existed among us, and about this populous city, *for more than four months*, so completely was it kept in subjection, by an unwearied attention to discover every one who caught it, and to apprize all others of their danger, that no more than four individuals suffered by it, viz. Mrs. Pepper's bound girl, Mr. Lilly's negro boy, Mrs. Craggs, and negro Daniel, and we did not lose one citizen by it, nor give the disease to any of our neighbours.

But another and very alarming accident happened more lately, in Anne Arundle County. A young lady (Miss Margaret Feinour) paid a visit during this last summer to her friends in Philadelphia, from whence she returned to her father's on Elkridge, on the 18th July. She became indisposed on the 25th same month, and in a few days afterwards a mild eruption made its appearance on her face, body and limbs; which was supposed to be the Chicken Pox. In this opinion her parents were inclined to confide, as they supposed, she had been effectually vaccinated when a child. In the sequel, however, they found that they were mistaken. Their daughter's case proved to be the natural Small Pox, and from her it was communicated to many persons in the neighbourhood, before they were aware of any danger. In Mr. Meriwether's family I found upwards of thirty cases of Small Pox, *three of which proved fatal*.

As soon as I received information respecting this accident, I published the handbill* subjoined, and had it distributed in

**To the People in and near to Elkridge.*

I have just received the following letter from Mr. Philemon Warfield, which with certain information received from several other persons residing in the same neighbourhood, fully establishes the fact, that *the Natural Small Pox has been introduced among you*; and if proper steps are not immediately taken to arrest its progress, it may soon be expected to spread abroad; and it may do us incalculable injury. No one can tell who or what family may first fall a victim to it.

There are many thousand persons, (I mean in this neighbourhood, and near to it) who would therefore

every direction through the country where I thought it could best serve the purposes intended. It had the desired effect, and I was met by a very numerous concourse of people, all anxious to obtain security from the dangers to which they were exposed. About three hundred persons were vaccinated on this occasion and the vaccine remedy distributed to all who stood in need. These efforts were crowned with success, and the Small Pox has been thereby again banished from this state.

But independent of these accidents from Small Pox, which have fallen under my observation, I have received communications from physicians, and others residing in distant parts of the state, urging me in the greatest haste to forward them a supply of the vaccine matter, to arrest the progress of this plague, when it has been introduced into their respective neighbourhoods—to enumerate all these applica-

to the Montgomery road which leads from Ellicott's Mills. I will be prepared to furnish you with the genuine Vaccine Matter, and will distribute it with proper directions for its use, *gratis*, to any person who has occasion for it at this time. I will likewise vaccinate any person, *free of any charge*, who may wish to have the operation performed by me—or I will shew how the same should be done in the domestick way, giving you such description of the vaccine process, as will guard any of you against those mistakes which have been so frequently and fatally made both here and elsewhere.

JAMES SMITH.

BALTIMORE, SEPT. 19th, 1817.

Elkridge, Baltimore County, 18th September, 1817.

To Dr. JAMES SMITH, Superintendent of the Vaccine Institution.

SIR—I would be obliged to you for some genuine vaccine matter, the Small Pox having been recently introduced into this neighbourhood.

About the 1st of last month Miss Feinour, having just returned from Philadelphia, where she must have received the contagion, was taken with the natural Small Pox, but has recovered after a severe attack. She was confined at her father's house, living about twenty miles from Baltimore, and three miles south of the Frederick-Town Turnpike road, adjoining to Carrol's Manor. Mr. Feinour's young children continued to go to school in the neighbourhood, he being under the impression, that his daughter's complaint was the Chicken-Pox. In this way however, the Small-Pox was soon communicated to several families in the neighbourhood, viz. to Mr. Nicholas Merriwether's, to Mr. Edward Eighlehart's, and to Mr. Donohoe's children, who were vaccinated at this time.

... was held about four miles west
attended, and fears are
... through the

tions, or to show the happy effects which have resulted from an immediate attention on my part to comply with them, would exhaust your patience—suffice it to say, that every day's experience in every part of the United States, has fully established the efficacy of vaccination, as a certain preventive of Small Pox; and I hope no further proof than is herein hastily adduced, will be wanting to convince the most sceptical or prejudiced, that the benefits which any people will derive from keeping up an uninterrupted supply of this remedy for their use, must be invaluable to them, and indispensably necessary for their safety.

To be prepared, at any time, to prevent the spreading of the Small Pox, in any place where it may chance to be introduced, requires that there should always be kept ready and at hand, some of the genuine vaccine matter, fresh and active. But, it is a fact not so generally known as it ought to be, that to preserve the vaccine matter, so as to keep it active, with any degree of certainty, longer than for a few weeks at a time, it is requisite to renew it in regular succession, from one proper subject to another, leaving but a short time intervening between these operations. If, however, any link in this chain of operations should happen to be broken, whereby any considerable chasm may occur, this remedy will expire, and cannot be renewed again, except it be taken from some new or foreign source. No individual, therefore, can keep up an uninterrupted supply of the vaccine matter, unless he shall devote his time unceasingly to it. If there were a sufficient number of fit subjects for vaccination prepared, to be always ready at hand, at the precise time when they would be wanted, to form their respective links, in this chain of successive operations, there would be no difficulty whatever in preserving this matter, without interruption, as long as we pleased. But since the Small Pox may be truly said to have been extirpated from this state, it appears to be daily becoming a more difficult task to procure fit subjects for this operation, through whom a regular and sufficient supply of this matter can be obtained. When our citizens indeed are suffering, or likely to suffer, from the variolous contagion, I have never yet found it difficult to procure a superabundant supply of the vaccine matter. But when there is no danger of Small Pox, to urge the careless to perform their duty, I find it a very troublesome business to prevail on families to submit to vaccination, even when I offer to perform it for them as I most generally do, grati-

itously; and it is a fact that I am now deriving my chief supply of matter from the state of Pennsylvania, where I have sent an agent to vaccinate under my direction, for the express purpose of procuring fresh matter, in sufficient quantity for my present purposes. If the Small Pox, however, was not severely punishing the citizens of Pennsylvania for their stupid neglect of vaccination, I would find it more difficult, perhaps, to procure the vaccine matter among them, than I now do to renew it in the city of Baltimore, where I can always find some few who will thank me for vaccinating them. I am well aware that my vaccine Institution has been stated, by some of my medical brethren near me, to be of but little value; and they allege that they have always been able to procure the vaccine matter here, whenever they wanted it. This may be very true, but if it proves any thing at all, it proves the great value of the very Institution which they would wish to destroy. I do not fear to be contradicted, when I state that there is not one practitioner of medicine in this city, who has ever yet preserved his own supply of vaccine matter, longer than for short periods of time; when called on to vaccinate in the regular course of practice. When the Small Pox has been introduced at any time, I have always experienced a very general demand for it by the physicians of this city, and it is seldom that many days pass by, without some one, or more of them, calling on me to renew their supply of matter. As I have always given it to practitioners in Baltimore, free of any fees or charges, so likewise they distribute it on the same terms. If every practitioner in this city, therefore, can in this way, procure the vaccine matter when he has occasion to use it, it certainly ought not be urged as an argument against the Institution. If the genuine matter can be procured at any time by those who want it, it is of no consequence whether it be taken from me, or from others who are directly or indirectly furnished from the Institution. The case, however, is entirely different, as regards practitioners and private families residing in the country, or in any part of the state, at a distance from this city. When these citizens want it they find it most convenient to resort directly to the Institution; and at such times as they have been heretofore visited by the Small Pox, they have experienced that there was no other way than by an immediate and direct application to this Institution, in which they could procure, with any degree of certainty, a remedy thus become essentially necessary for their safety.

But there have been other arguments adduced against my vaccine establishment, and there are many who would wish to confine the use of the vaccine matter to a few, rather than allow me to invite the whole community to participate in its advantages. I have always stated it as my opinion, and it is the very basis on which this Institution is founded. THAT EVERY INTELLIGENT CITIZEN WHO COULD READ AND WRITE, IF PROVIDED WITH GENUINE VACCINE MATTER, AND PROPER DIRECTIONS HOW TO USE IT, WAS PERFECTLY COMPETENT TO SECURE HIS OWN FAMILY FROM THE SMALL POX, IF HE CHOSE TO DO SO. This is, nevertheless, the chief front of my offending, to many who think my Institution of very "little value." To reconcile my views with their ideas of the value of this establishment, would be utterly impossible. On this score, therefore, I must be content to have offended unintentionally, all those who wish to "confine the practice of vaccination entirely to physicians who would observe a regular period of attendance, throughout the whole course of the vaccine process, especially on the fifth, seventh, ninth and twelfth days of the disease."* If every citizen could enjoy the benefit of the attendance of an honest and skilful physician, during the whole of the vaccine process, there is no one who would be more gratified thereby than myself; and the public would, I have no doubt, derive an incalculable benefit from such an attendance. But if we would limit the practice of vaccination to the narrow bounds here prescribed, it would be to confine it almost exclusively to cities, and a few other populous places, and to deny the blessings of this remedy to nine out of ten of those who now derive security from the Small Pox by it. I hope I am not so uncharitable as to attribute any improper motives to those who seriously entertain apprehensions that injurious consequences may result from the system of domestic vaccination, which I have recommended. And I would desist from it, without any further resistance to my numerous opponents, if experience had not fully taught me that my method is not only a safe one, but it is so constructed, that it is impossible for any one to be led into an error by it, if the directions given are faithfully attended to. Before my opponents, therefore, insist upon the necessity of confining the practice of vaccination to physicians alone, or that I should relinquish the system which I have adopted, for ex-

* See the report of the Medical Society of New-York.

sure
tending the benefits of vaccination to the whole community; it behooves them to extend their enquiries, and ascertain what has been the result of my plans, in places where they have been actually carried into operation. Has any individual ever been led into any mistake by pursuing the plan I have recommended? Have "intelligent gentlemen" been able to secure their own families from the Small Pox, when danger threatened them, and there was no physician to afford them relief? Is my offering no more than a fanciful theory, which I have proposed, when I [redacted] the public *"that the efficacy of any vaccine process may be always determined with certainty, by the examination of the crust produced by it,"* or is it really founded in fact, and may be depended on as an unerring test, by which those who are vaccinated, may know whether they are certainly secured from Small Pox or not? These are enquiries which every friend to the discovery of Jenner ought to make before he would recommend that the doors of this Institution should be shut against all except a few skilful physicians. To allay the fears and "regrets" of all those, however, who yet entertain any distrust in vaccination, conducted in the manner I have proposed, I will state, that no circumstance has yet occurred to my knowledge, in any part of the United States, which induces me in the most remote degree, to apprehend any difficulty whatever; but that my confidence in the utility of this plan I have suggested, has daily increased, in the same proportion as my Institution has become more and more generally known throughout the United States.

It would afford me great satisfaction, if I had it in my power to compute with any degree of accuracy, how many thousand persons have been secured against Small Pox in the states of Maryland and Virginia, by the matter which I have distributed free to every applicant, and which has been used according to my directions as well in the domestic way as by regular physicians. If it was possible to obtain any accurate statement of this kind, I should not fear any investigation which could show the effects which have resulted from vaccination in these two states, compared with the practice in any other two states in the union. I must therefore be excused, if I should feel anxious to support an institution, which I conceive to be of great value to the public, against every opponent: and I will go on with it, as usual, until my principles can be disapproved by other evidences, than such as arise from personal prejudices, or the mere opinion of contending theorists.

Before I conclude this letter, however, I would ask, how distressing would have been the situation of many of the citizens of Maryland, if on the late occasions when the Small Pox has been introduced among us, there had not been an Institution for them to resort to; from which they could procure a supply of genuine vaccine matter without any loss of time. On every occasion of this kind this Institution has been always resorted to, with avidity and confidence; and I am proud to say, that it has always successfully contributed to the speedy expulsion of this malady from among us.

If the legislature therefore should agree with me that this Institution is calculated to promote the general welfare: likely to defend the people against the evils to be suffered from the Small Pox; I flatter myself they will grant such pecuniary aid as will secure forever a constant supply of genuine matter to be given *free of every expense* to every citizen of Maryland who may want it.

I have the honour to remain

Your most obedient and humble Servant,

JAMES SMITH.

*General Vaccine Institution,
Baltimore, 3d January, 1818. }*



P. S. I have forwarded to the Chairman of the committee to whom my memorial has been referred, a certificate from the managers of the lottery, corroborative of the statements made in my first letter—also a certificate from some of the most eminent and distinguished physicians of this city, relative to the utility of a vaccine Institution, and the necessity which exists, of making a proper provision for preserving the vaccine matter.

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